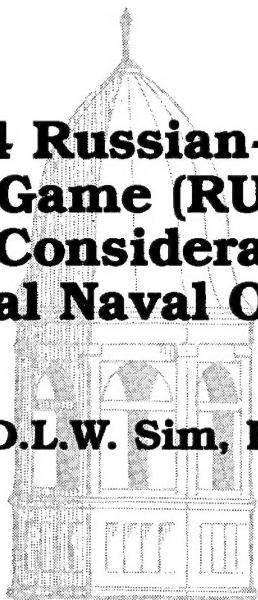


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**The 1994 Russian-UK-US  
Naval War Game (RUKUS 94)  
Important Considerations for  
Multinational Naval Operations**

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**THE 1994 RUSSIAN-UK-US NAVAL WAR GAME (RUKUS 94) — IMPORTANT  
CONSIDERATIONS FOR MULTINATIONAL NAVAL OPERATIONS**

by  
**D. Leslie W. Sim, Commander, Royal Navy**

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## **THE 1994 RUSSIAN -UK-US NAVAL WAR GAME (RUKUS 94)— IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR MULTINATIONAL NAVAL OPERATIONS**

### **Introduction**

One of the first military evidences of thawing in the Cold War was the establishment of a series of talks between the Soviet (now Russian), United States and Royal Navies in 1988. Sponsored by the Foundation for International Security, the goal was to promote East-West understanding through discussions of naval strategies and force deployments. Although the first few talks were characterized by cool, though frank, interchanges, each succeeding meeting has seen the mistrust developed during the Cold War fall away like chunks of glacier into the sea. The last two meetings involved operational simulations and were quantum leaps forward from the more staid, across-the-table talks previously held.

In 1993, with the end of the Cold War and the establishment of other and more formal, navy to navy contacts, the first gaming session, entitled "Triple Trust," was introduced into the talks. The initial game took place at the Maritime Tactical School at HMS DRYAD. This two day game was designed largely to explore elementary levels of concepts involved in combined naval operations.

In May 1994, Russian, UK and US naval officers participated in the second series of the games, entitled "RUKUS 94," held at the US Naval War College. The game was designed to advance mutual understanding and to explore more in depth

concepts for combined operations. All discussions were off the record and it was implicitly understood that comments did not necessarily reflect official policies of any service or government. Each national team was led by a Flag Officer,\* and included a marine/naval infantry officer to provide the amphibious force expertise required by the game scenario. As the situation was based on a United Nations operation, the director of the relatively new UN Situation Centre, Mr Stan Carlson, and two planners from the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) provided valuable advice and realism to game play.

RUKUS 94 highlighted important considerations in mounting successful multinational naval operations in support of United Nations resolutions — the most likely scenario in which non-allied navies will find themselves cooperating together.

This article examines the current peace support environment and identifies the issues and problems associated with such operations. RUKUS 94 provides an excellent vehicle for this examination since it played out a generic operation of this type.

#### **The Utility of Naval Forces in Peace Support Operations**

While the primary focus on military support for United Nations resolutions has understandably concentrated on land forces, naval forces are likely to play an increasingly important role. This conclusion is underscored by the fact that military

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\* VADM Youri Kaisin, RFN — First Deputy Commander-in-Chief Russian Federation Navy.

RADM Joseph C. Strasser, USN — President, US Naval War College.

RADM John A. Trewby — Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Operational Requirements)Sea, UK Ministry of Defence. Teams consisted of 5-10 participants.

missions in the Balkans, Cambodia and Somalia have all had naval forces — either warships, personnel and/or aircraft — making significant contributions. Although these have been primarily land conflicts, the oceans of the world themselves contain the seeds for much future strife. For example, on 21 July 1994 the New York Times reported that China had deployed two warships in the South China Sea to blockade a Vietnamese oil rig. "Diplomats and industry analysts warned that the blockade could quickly deteriorate into another fire fight between the two countries . . ." the report stated.<sup>1</sup> This Spratley Islands dispute, Japan's outrage in early 1994 over Russia's dumping of nuclear waste in the Sea of Japan, and Chile's contentious concept that a coastal state has rights to resource management decisions beyond its 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are a few of the scenarios which could give rise to maritime crises resulting in naval forces being deployed to support United Nations resolutions designed to defuse tension and maintain peace in the region.

#### **RUKUS 94 - The Scenario**

The scenario for the RUKUS 94 naval simulation had two imaginary "Southern Ocean" countries — Green and Orange — in a state of suspended hostilities brokered by the UN following open warfare over disputed oil-rich territory along a mutual border. The fragile truce seemed to be breaking down and a force of 90 UN observers and 100 international oil workers required extraction from the disputed area. A UN-sponsored naval force, made up of two combatant and one support ship from each RUKUS country, was dispatched to the area and the three national teams were

required to plan an amphibious extraction operation. Green and Orange were credited with a fairly comprehensive order of battle for their national forces. An element of military risk for the UN-sponsored force was factored into the game by introducing a rogue faction of Green military officers who could not be relied upon to obey the cease-fire. These officers were thought to exercise control over some elements of the Green naval and air inventory.

#### **Today's Peace Support Environment**

Before proceeding further it is worth examining the "peace support operational environment" since this affects the posture taken by military forces conducting such missions. Much debate continues over this subject. Recently, as an example, in the pages of Jane's Defence Weekly<sup>2</sup> a former Head of Defence Studies for the British Army, Richard Connaughton, crossed pens with the present Assistant Director Land Warfare, Colonel Allan Mallinson, over whether a doctrinally identifiable middle ground exists between traditional peacekeeping and enforcement operations.

It seems clear to me that many of the operations taking place under the aegis of the UN since the end of the Cold War cannot be adequately described as either traditional peacekeeping or enforcement actions. Universal consent for the operation has not always been present amongst local factions or has evaporated in some cases without withdrawal of the UN-sponsored force. At the same time operations have commenced with force levels and equipment less than that required militarily to guarantee successful combat against the range of potential adversaries who could oppose the operation. John Mackinlay, Director of the Peace Support Project at the

Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute of Brown University, has added usefully to this debate with his paper entitled "Multifunctional Forces," where he states:

The *ad hoc* UN structure that has emerged in response to recent contingencies, can be described as a multifunctional force. Stronger than a traditional peacekeeping/observer group but smaller than an enforcement task force, its strength is typically between 15,000-25,000. It is too weak to operate without the consent of the majority of local factions and civil populations and cannot enforce solutions by military means alone.<sup>3</sup>

In these situations I believe a significant feature is that political considerations impact not only at the strategic, but also at the operational and tactical level of operations. Thus force and unit commanders (and sometimes even individual troops) have to factor these into their plans and actions.

The scenario employed in the RUKUS 94 game fitted well into this mid level environment; however, timing, team composition and game objectives prevented protracted play of the mid level peace support environmental factors.

#### RUKUS 94 Play

The initial task of the players was to plan an amphibious extraction operation. Working groups were established with each nation represented and tasked to plan definitive portions of the mission. A land operations group was tasked with planning the amphibious extraction. An interoperability group worked issues related to common logistics and communications support. The Flag Officers were tasked with reviewing Command and Control (C2) and Rules of Engagement (ROE) aspects of the play.

The second portion of the game employed the computerized Enhanced Naval

Wargaming System (ENWGS) to display a variety of threat scenarios, i.e., "security challenges" to the combined naval force as it departed the amphibious operations area with the observers and oil workers embarked. This phase of the game was conducted in plenary session, with the players organized in national teams to give a national perspective to discussions on ROE and force weapon and defensive systems employment.

#### RUKUS 94 — Issues

##### Language

Accurately reflecting the real world, the first issue which had to be addressed was how to deal with language differences. RUKUS 94, as with the prior trilateral game in the UK, was conducted via *consecutive* translation. The cost of equipment and interpreters precluded *simultaneous* translation. While the Russians themselves stated that English would probably be the language of choice for operational communications, they have few English speaking line officers and therefore the number of interpreters was identified as a key limiting factor in future combined operations. The number of interpreters who can be embarked could be limited by space availability (particularly in the Command ship), and that in turn, together with fatigue considerations, could limit the number of task force communications circuits that can be utilized. These factors will have a direct effect on the command structure and organization of the force.

Navies also use terminology rich in traditional seafaring, as well as operational,

terms. This adds to problems of interpretation and in RUKUS 94 it quickly became apparent that there was a need to establish mutually agreed and understood terms in particular covering operations, manoeuvres and ROE.

#### Command and Control

The assumptions governing this part of game play were: first, that the operation was UN-sponsored, but not UN-controlled; and, second, that all three national command authorities (NCA) would permit an integrated force structure with centralized operational control (OPCON). These assumptions may have been a bit optimistic. A study of naval operations in *Operation Desert Storm*, and those taking place in the Adriatic in support of United Nations resolutions, shows that nations as a rule retain maximum national command and control commensurate with achievement of the aim. The *modus operandi* is to transfer OPCON and tactical control (TACON) of the minimum number and lowest level of units for the minimum time necessary.

In RUKUS 94, with play focussed at the operational and tactical level, there were still plenty of questions to consider about C2.

Some important considerations were:

*Organizational Structure of the Task Force.* Initial discussion revolved around who would be the Task Force Commander (CTF). The lead UN representative offered that in the real world the UN chooses a Force Commander (FC) based on three factors:

- Size of force contribution
- Availability of a suitably experienced and senior officer

- Appearance of impartiality to factions in dispute

In this game the nation team leaders also considered:

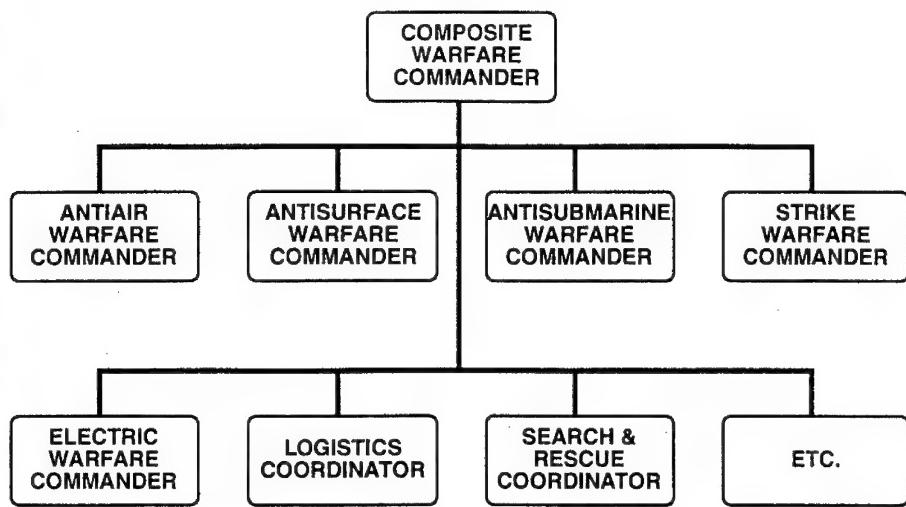
- Individual C2 ship fit capability
- Operational language factor
- Interoperability

After some discussion of these points, all three Flag Officers agreed on the choice of the US as the CTF.

*Composition and location of the CTF's staff.* Participants agreed that a force this size would require only one Flag Officer embarked for at-sea command, but there was felt a need for a combined naval headquarters ashore (location not addressed) to act as planners and interface with NCAs.

*Integration of the Task Force.* All nations appeared to endorse a Composite Warfare Commander (CWC) concept of organization. In a CWC-organized task force, all functions concerned with one particular warfare area are assigned to a single commander (see figure 1). Thus the warfare commander charged with antiair warfare (AAW) will detail air surveillance, friendly fighter tasking, and force missile assignments. When a threat develops, he will manage force reactions within this overall plan to neutralize it. There are also coordinated arrangements for logistics, search and rescue and other task force needs.

FIGURE 1: COMPOSITE WARFARE CONCEPT



Players recognized that integration to this level, while good for the game, would have an effect on overall efficiency and was idealistic when compared with real world practice. In *Desert Storm*, only four navies (US, UK, Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian) waged offensive antisurface warfare operations, yet much greater integration was to be found in the more defensively postured antiair warfare arrangements — a reflection of both interoperability and political factors.

Integration of the amphibious landing operation in RUKUS 94 further highlighted constraints imposed by differences in language and communications equipment. The solution was to divide tasks at the national contingent level, accept that there would be no integration of forces below the company level, and deconflict

movements by assigning national lanes for the movement of contingents ashore.

#### Rules of Engagement

Earlier gaming decisions ensured that all participants saw the need to operate with one set of ROE, and that these rules had to provide for defence of the force as well as defence of the mission. In the real world this level of agreement is seldom achieved. In *Desert Storm*, national ROE were retained by naval forces, and in the Adriatic — reflecting the variety of C2 arrangements in place there — a mix of national, NATO and UN ROE are in force depending on unit, task and location.

In RUKUS 94, discussion of ROE identified the need for common understanding of, and mutual agreement on, terms such as "hostile act" and "hostile intent." It was felt that pre-crisis work in this area would be of great value for any real world operations. When discussing AAW arrangements, the Russian representative stated that his units would remain alert to "defend themselves." While it behooves any commander to protect his ship, language difficulties and widely differing weapon capabilities and tactics in an *ad hoc* coalition force may precipitate actions adversely affecting the entire force, revealing how fragile composite C2 arrangements really are.

#### Interoperability

*Logistics.* The issue of logistics support was dismissed in the game by noting this is a national responsibility. While each national force contribution in the game included a support ship, in the real world this might be judged a deluxe arrangement. Given political approval, force integration will likely reach its highest form in the logistics arena, especially in the provision of fuel supplies.

*Communications.* The need for secure communications was identified primarily for use on command net and for passing intelligence information, thus minimizing the need for this equipment. The Russian representative stated a preference for a means of secure recorded traffic (teletype) — which also helps the translation problems — and suggested utilizing "old" systems to equip the force with common equipment. The UK recommended use of modern "fly-away" mobile systems that could be placed on designated ships with system operators. The number of mobile units required was limited to one per nation with onward communications of data transmitted on national circuits or by helicopter. The only communications capability with UN forces were clear circuits. Emergency and tactical manoeuvring circuits were to be clear nets.

The existent link interoperability of US and UK ships was seen as an advantage for the AAW defence of the force. The Russian representative was content with either the US or UK running air defence, but, as stated earlier, he pointed out that his units would remain alert to defend themselves.

*Intelligence.* There was ready agreement on the need to exchange data. The methodology chosen to achieve this was to exchange intelligence information (sanitized to protect sources). Each unit fused and interpreted this together with its normal national product.

#### **Conclusions**

The RUKUS 94 Report,<sup>4</sup> produced by the US Naval War College, identified several recommendations for improving future trilateral operations and simulations. These recommendations, supplemented by my personal views on multinational naval

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operations undertaken in support of United Nations resolutions, lead me to the following conclusions:

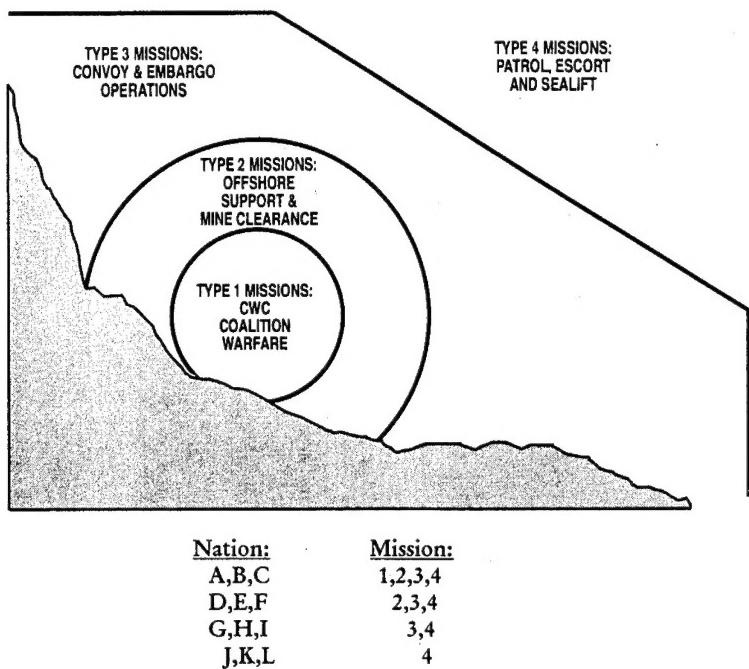
Command and Control

It is apparent that, outside of NATO, the levels of integration required to implement a CWC organized multinational naval task force are constrained by:

- National command requirements
- Integration of ROE
- Language problems
- Equipment interoperability

In *Desert Storm*, and in the Adriatic, workable compromises — adopting a layered approach to operations (see figure 2 below) — overcame this problem. While NATO is at present considering the US promoted Commander Joint Task Force (CJTF) concept — which results in high levels of integration of forces — I believe there is need to design other forms of integration of naval forces which allow for lesser C2 integration while promoting information flow and the sharing of tasks.

FIGURE 2: THE LAYERED APPROACH TO NAVAL COALITION OPERATIONS



#### Multinational Naval Staffs

Any multinational naval crisis response which involves naval contingents not exclusively part of an alliance or defence pact will require the rapid formation of both embarked and ashore combined-planning staffs. Conceptual design of the composition of such staffs, done in advance of crisis, will greatly facilitate the smooth integration of any crisis response naval force. The requirement for interpreters should be factored

into such designs. Colonel Gary Anderson, USMC, in a US Naval War College report, *Operation Sea Angel: A Retrospective on the 1991 Humanitarian Relief Operation in Bangladesh*<sup>5</sup> made recommendations for skeletal structures for joint staffs employed in crisis response to humanitarian disasters.

#### Language

As an immediate solution to ameliorating C2 and staff composition issues, individual naval services should maintain contingency plans for mobilization of interpreter assets experienced in naval operations and terminology.

#### Doctrinal Transparency and Fusion

The overcoming of C2, language and integration problems will be aided by an understanding of potential coalition partners naval doctrine. Free exchange of this type of information will also enable the development of common doctrine for non-sensitive operations. Some important work to achieve this is already underway. NATO, under the aegis of the Military Agency for Standardization (Navy), has produced *Extac 768 — Maritime Manoeuvreing and Tactical Procedures* for use by non-NATO navies and several other NATO naval tactical publications are being processed for release.

#### Equipment Interoperability

Designing interoperability into naval equipment, particularly in communications equipment and data links, will greatly enhance the ability of navies to operate multinationally. It would be naive, however, to expect great progress to be made rapidly in this area. Not only is cost high but NATO is still working this issue after 40 years of composite operations.

### Training

Mutual training (live and simulated), will enormously help navies, which have not historically operated together, to develop their ability to participate in multinational operations. At the low end of the spectrum, RUKUS 94 is an example of such an initiative. At a higher level, the US-sponsored BALTOPS<sup>\*</sup> and UNITAS series of live exercises achieve much in this area.

### **Summary**

There is great likelihood that naval operations will be mounted in support of United Nations resolutions. Many of the problems inherent in the planning and execution of such operations were highlighted in RUKUS 94. The continuation of such simulations will not only foster trust among navies but will help identify both challenges and solutions for naval peace support operations.

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<sup>\*</sup> BALTOPS (Baltic Operations) 94 included ships from the non-NATO nations of Russia, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Finland and Sweden.  
UNITAS (not an acronym) is the US navy's annual deployment around South America which promotes regional navy-to-navy contacts through live exercises and port visits.

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